A True and Perfect NARRATIVE OF THE Great and Dreadful *Damages* Susteyned in Several Parts of *England*, by the Late Extraordinary SNOWS:

Whereby above *Twenty Families* of Poor People, Men, Women, and Children, were Distressed, and some Destroyed at *Langsdale*, in the Bishoprick of *Durham*: The Snow from the Hills covering the Tops of their Houses, that they could not get out: having burnt all their Goods to keep them warm.

As also of a Family in *Somerset-shire* neer *Bath*, so beset with the Snow, that they were forced to live Three Days on nothing but Grains.

And several Persons, and Great Quantities of Cattle and Sheep lost in *Northumberland*, *Derbyshire*, *Glocestershire*, *Shropshire*, *Lincolnshire*, *Isle* of *Ely*, and other places.

Faithfully Extracted from Letters lately sent from Persons of Good Credit and Quality in all those parts.

Printed for *P. Brooksby*, in *West-Smith's field*.

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THE Wonderful SNOW:

BY a Letter Dated the 7th. of *March* instant, sent to an eminent Shop-keeper in *Thames-street*, from a Chapman of his living at in the Bishoprick of *Durham*, we are ascertained of a most sad accident occasioned there by the late excessive Snows, which is since confirmed by several other Posts from those parts, to have happned as follows.

In a place called *Langfield*, scituated towards the North of the Bishoprick of *Durham*, lying between two hills, the valley being very long, but exceeding narrow, so that it was above a hundred paces over; there stood several small Houses or Cottages inhabited by Shepherds and other poor people, their dwellings being only made of Loam-walls, one story, and thatcht over head: Here the Snow (which began earlyer, and was far more violent and excessive in those parts than in these Southern Counties) came so furiously driven down the Hills by North-East Winds, that the poor people could hardly stir abroad, it was grown so deep on a sudden, insomuch that some of them began to apprehend danger, and thought to have got away over the hills, to some place of more security, but this wholesome advise (which might have preserved their lives) was slighted by others more bold, who alledged that it could not Snow always, and that no question but it would be over in short time; and indeed (as if their unhappy Fates had over-ruled the Weather, to flatter them

to their ruine) after the first two or three days (which had covered the ground generally four or five foot deep, but in drifts at some places, it lay at least ten or twelve foot high) The heavens seemed more clear, as if they should have been troubled with no more, but behold on the third day of *March*, being *Shrove-Tuesday*, it fell a snowing again with greater violence (the weather being excessive cold, and the wind continuing high as before) all that day and night, so that the whole Valley was filled with Snow, and almost level'd with the tops of the Hills, the houses were Covered over, and not to be seen; the miserable people when they had slept long, and waited tedious'ly for the aproach of day, at last get up, and think to look abroad, but this they endeavour in vain, for they find themselves buried alive in Snow, and though they used their best skil, and greatest strength, could by no means get out: They that had any wood or fireing made use of it, hoping by that means to melt themselves out a way, but found not that so effectual as *Hannibal*'s Project, famous in History, when he eat a passage for his Army, through those vast Mountains of the *Alps*, with Vinegar; for having thus to no purpose wearied themselves, and wasted their Fuel, Cold, Hunger, Darkness, Horrour, and Dispair begin all at once to seize their hearts: their poverty for the most part was such, as did not allow them to keep much store of Provision in their houses before-hand, and the weather had been so bad for above a Fortnight before, that they could not conveniently either work to earn, or go abroad to buy Victuals; so that their Stock was soon exhausted, and after having made shift as long as possibly they could, were at last reduced to the worst of Humane evils, a necessity of starving for want of food.

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There needs no Rhetorick to set forth the miserable condition of these poor souls, which of it self was so deplorable, that it cannot in the bare Relation, but affect the hearts, and draw Carnation-tears from the eyes of each Compassionate Reader. The dismalness of living in continual darkness, as in a Grave: The Extremity of the Frost, the Lamentations of half distracted Women, and cries of dying Children for Bread, whilst they to whom they make their moans are starving themselves, may easily present the imaginations with spectacle of Horrour. Let it suffice to say, That cold and want at last brought welcome death to rid them of their Torments, where paying a tear of Tears as a Just Tribute to the Tyranny of their sad fate, let us leave them, and now look abroad and inquire how they'r found.

The Neighbouring People (whom better Situation of their dwellings preserved from such Calamity) seeing *Langsdale* Valley so overwhelmed with an Inundation of Snow, and touch'd with a generous Commiseration of the poor Inhabitants, whom they had all the reason of the world to conclude, lost, or in a desperate condition, assemble in good numbers, and with mighty toil in clearing a passage, at last get to these Cottagers, the greater part of whom they found destroyed as aforesaid, whereof some lay dead with grass in their mouths, having no fire left to dress it; others that had a better stock of firing made shift to keep themselves alive by eating Cats-flesh, Dogs, or whatever they could get, and these they charitably removed thence and made provision for them.

This Story as it is most sad in itself, so is it most true and certain, and we wish we were not so unhappy as to be able almost to parallel it by another miserable Acci-

dent

dent in the West, occasioned by the very same means, as we have it in a Letter from an Ingenious Gentleman of *Bath*: Thus

The Snow was so great in those parts, that a poor man living with his Wife, and a great charge of Children, on a Common about 10 m. from *Bath*, at a great distance from Neighbours, were almost shut up in the like manner. The good man however made a salley out, and endeavoured with his Gun to shoot Birds, or what he could meet with for the sustenance of his wanting Family, but found so little booty, that still they were almost ready to starve. Insomuch that for several days they lived upon nothing but a few Grains, till a Gentlemans man riding that way chanced to see some of the biggest children greedily feeding on these miserable dainties, the sight whereof affected the good natured fellows heart so far, that he made further inquiry, and being soon convinced of their sad necessitous condition, when he came home acquainted his Lady, who being of an excellent charitable disposition, immediately ordered him to carry them as much good wholsome victuals as he could, we need not relate with what Joy they receiv'd this blessing, which yet (alas! how fare beforeh the hopes of silly mortals) occasioned their death, who perhaps might have made shift with their Grains to have supported their lives, for being so near famishing, they fell so greedily on this unexpected Cheer, that they opprest nature so fatally that the same night the Woman and five of her Children Expired.

To these unhappy relations we might add diverse others no less true and certain, as that of a Baker and his Bride at *Tewksbury* in *Glostershire*, who riding out the very next day, after they were married to visit some friends about ten miles,

miles, were both destroyed, grim death treading on Hymens heels, and their Nuptial delights child with a cold eternal sleep in sheets of Snow, wherein they were afterwards found dead embracing each other.

Of a Minister lost horse and all by the same means in *Darbyshire*, three poor women destroyed as they endeavored to go to a Market in *Shropshire*, two Carryers servants stifled by the Snow in *Lincolnshire*, and a Post-boy frozen to death in it neer *Morpeth* in *Northumberland*.

What shall we say of great quantities of Cattel kil'd in *Romney Marsh*, whole flocks of Sheep perished in *Huntingtonshire*, great mischiefs done in the *Fenns*, and Isle of *Ely*. In brief, this Superabundant Snow was no less General, then prejudicial, and there is scarce a County in *England* but may bring in several Indictments against it for damages susteyned to a considerable value, not to speak of the mischiefs occasioned by great Floods when melted by the Thaw.

Nor is it only *England* has been a sufferer, our Forraign Letters give us an Account that other Nations have at the same time been sufferers in miseries of the like kind: Perticularly in *Germany* the Snow has not been only great, but in a sort Prodigious. Letters from *Vienna*, of the 26th. of *February*, *S. N.* informing, That thereabouts there had been great quantities of Worms and Cobwebs falling in the Snow, of which abundance also were observed in *Insprukke* in the County of *Tyrol*, of which great notice had been taken by several Curious Enquirers after such strange Accidents: Though it seems often to have been seen before: For so saith the Ingenious *Johannes Heidfeildius*, in *Sua Sphinge Philosophica*, *Alicubi in ipsis nivibus nascuntur vermiculi & Tineæ*: This we are sure of, that

we could never more properly than of late repeat that of the Poet:

Ecce ruit densum tacitarum vellus Aquarum:

A Feather'd Rain, came in abundance down,
And with dry Inundations did us Drown.

FINIS.